

Successful Hibernation of Second Instar Larva of *Apatura iris* L.

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Since it has been stated that *iris* larvae entering hibernation after only one moult never survive the winter (*vide Ent. Rec.*, 72: 257, and *Notes and Views of the Purple Emperor*, p. 166), I thought it might be of interest to record the fortunes of a first instar larva found in a West Sussex wood in August 1974.

It was evident from the head/body ratio that this larva had hatched from the ovum only two or three days previously. It was confined in a plastic box, and it proceeded to the first moult within the week, after which it was sleeved by itself on a small potted sallow in the garden. For the purposes of this note I shall refer to this as larva A.

At this time an *iris* ovum was found in Alice Holt Forest, and from this, larva B hatched four days later. Larva B, which proved to be a convenient control, moulted eight days after hatching and thereafter rapidly overtook A in both size and general development. Both frequently fed simultaneously and a regular meal time for both was about two hours after dusk, but it was noticed, even at this stage, that larva A had a smaller appetite.

Larva B then went into set for the second moult in early September, and completed ecdysis after the usual three to four day immobility. I watched A very carefully, but from mid-September on it grew hardly at all, fed only sporadically (though I tried stimulation with direct sunlight, etc.), and both larvae went into hibernation at the end of October — B in a fork and the smaller, browner A against a bud. Both were situated side by side, on separate sleeved sallows, in our north-facing back garden.

Larva B remained virtually immobile until it emerged from hibernation in early April. Larva A moved at least twice during the winter, to the base of the bush for several weeks in December, and then back to a terminal spray, where it remained until it came out of hibernation two or three days after B. A still looked much smaller than B and seemed to take longer to regain its green colour, but both recommenced feeding vigorously and their subsequent progress during spring 1975 is summarised below.

Larva	2nd moult	3rd moult	4th moult	Pupa	Imago
A	29.4.75	19.5.75	14.6.75	30.6.75	17.7.75 normal ♀
B	—	4.5.75	27.5.75	14.6.75	6.7.75 normal ♂

Mr. H. G. Short informs me that occasionally he has had Continental *iris* larvae successfully hibernate in their second instar but those of British origin attempting to do so have died during the winter. I would be interested to hear of any similar records of this occurrence.

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